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ABSTRACT

This paper begins by identifying and discussing six attributes or characteristics of television interviews, which include the function of the interview, i.e., information or entertainment; the context within which it is presented in the program; the number of interviews and interviewees; the duration of the interview and the degree of its formality; and the kinds of people that appear in television interviews. Several television program formats common in many countries which involve some form of interviewing are then defined and described: (1) game shows; (2) variety shows; (3) talk shows; (4) feature interviews; (5) documentaries; (6) current affairs; and (7) news. Next, four categories of characteristics that can be systematically used to compare different interviews are discussed, i.e., identity, verbal, nonverbal, and situational codes. Each of these categories is further broken down to provide added means for analysis and understanding of television interviewing, e.g., demographic characteristics, questioning techniques, special codes, and location of the interview. The viability of the analytic scheme is then demonstrated via its application to programming in the United States, Great Britain, West Germany, and Israel. Substantial differences found in the types of interviews used in the four countries are cited, and it is suggested that these differences may be due to such factors as the pattern of media ownership, political pressures, and national character. Analyses of data on various facets of news interviewing in the four countries are presented in six tables. (CGD)

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THE TELEVISION INTERVIEW: ATTRIBUTES, FORMATS AND CODES

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THE TELEVISION INTERVIEW: ATTRIBUTES, FORMATS AND CODES

The television repertoire consists of a wide variety of television programs, many of which contain interviewing. Not all television programs are similar, however, as far as the kinds of interviews contained in them are concerned. This large array of programs can be divided into several program formats using criteria which distinguish between various aspects of the interviewing situation. Thus, there are several attributes or characteristics of the interview which can be utilized in an attempt to classify interviewing on television and to distinguish between the different kinds of programs in which interviewing occurs.

The present discussion begins with the enumeration some attributes or characteristics of the television interview. These attributes are then used to define several different formats of television programs in which interviews take place. Following this, a classification of codes is presented which can be used to analyze television interviews of the various formats.

Since the basic forms of the television repertoire which contain interviews are common in most western as well as in other countries, the codes which are offered below can serve as tools for comparing and contrasting among different countries, as well as among networks, local and national programming, etc. Thus, at the conclusion of the paper, I have chosen to illustrate this analytical scheme by providing several examples in which interviews conducted in television news in four countries (Britain, West Germany, Israel and the United States) are compared.

Attributes of television interviewing

A quick glance at any listing of television programming demonstrates the well known fact that television presents a variety of programs throughout the broadcast schedule. Some of these programs contain

interviews while others do not. Thus, in this context I am not concerned with movies, soap operas, action-adventure programs, musical variety shows, cartoons, etc. I am also not interested in commercials, although some do contain interviewing. My main concern is with a wide variety of programs such as news programs, interview (talk) shows, panel discussions, public affairs programs, and the like. These programs not only contain interviews which are conducted and presented in various ways, but often are based solely on interviews.

In order to classify any array of contents one needs to develop a set of criteria which can aid in distinguishing between various elements of the content, thereby assigning each element into a particular category. For example, in order to classify apples in a packing plant one can decide to use brand, color, size and degree of ripeness. Thus, my immediate and primary objective is to classify television programs according to the way the interviews are utilized in them. To do so it is necessary to decide on several attributes or characteristics of interviewing in the television context which will enable us determine in which category to place each program. I would like to stress that not all the attributes are completely exclusive of one another nor are they totally exhaustive of all the possible types. The ones I am suggesting are sufficient, however, to enable us to make a useful assessment as to the various kinds of interviews that exist on television and to be able to follow this with a comparative analysis of a sample of interviews. Following, then, are six attributes of the television interview in the framework of television programs.

1. <u>The function of the interview</u>. Broadly speaking, from the point of view of produces and audiences there are two main functions which a television interview may serve in a television program: information and entertainment. Without going into a thorough discussion of the nature of information and the meaning of entertainment, we can suffice by saying that

some interviews are conducted mainly for information while others are done mainly for entertainment. This does not mean to suggest, however, that no information can be presented or gained in an interview which is essentially conducted for entertainment, nor that an interview conducted primarily for information cannot be entertaining. These latter situations can be considered as "blends" of information and entertainment.

2. The salience of the interview. This attribute refers to the context within which the interview is presented in the program. In other words, it refers to the extent to which the program is devoted in its entirety to interviewing, regardless of whether it is with one or more interviewee, or whether it contains other things in addition to the interview. Thus, for example, the program can be devoted to one long interview; it could contain one or more shorter interviews; or it could contain a variety of contents such as musical pieces, comedy acts, as well as one or more interview; or it can consist of various news items, some or all of which contain interviews.

3. The frequency of interviews and interviewees. This attribute refers to the variability in terms of the number of interviews and interviewees in the program. Some programs contain only one interview while others contain two, three or even numerous interviews. In some of the programs the different interviews are conducted separately, with one interviewee at a time, while in other programs all the interviewees are interviewed simultaneously.

4. The duration of the interview. This attribute refers to the length of the interview as it is presented on television. Some interviews in television programs are quite long, sometimes lasting as long as one hour or more. On the other hand, there are interviews which, as presented on the screen, last merely a few seconds. Thus, there is much variability in terms of the duration of the interview.

5. The formality of the interview. This attribute is concerned with

the degree of formality of the interview situations as it is presented on the screen. Some interviews are presented as being quite formal whereas other interviews are conducted in informal settings and are presented as such. Moreover, the degree of formality while the interview is conducted is not necessarily reflected in the way it is presented to the audience. Thus, for example, part of a formal (and perhaps lengthy) interview can be presented as a brief statement by the interviewee.

6. Homogeneity of interviewee types. This attribute refers to the kinds of people that appear in television interviews. Some programs which contain interviews are highly uniform, thus presenting interviews with only one kind of interviewee, e.g., politicians, show business people, athletes, etc. In other program formats the interviews are conducted with a variety of people, in the same program there can be politicians, show business people and athletes. Thus, in the latter program format there might be on one occasion an interview with a politician whereas on another occasion the interviewee might be a movie star. Moreover, if more than one interviewee appears in a single program, in some program formats all the interviewees would be of the same general kind (e.g., politicians or actors) whereas in other formats there can be a variety of people.

Formats of interviewing in television programs

Using an inductive approach, I shall now use these six attributes of television interviews, to define and briefly describe several television program formats which are common in many countries. What differentiates these formats from one another is the combination of their attributes and characteristics. The terms I have chosen to label these formats is optional, of course, and should be considered within the purpose and framework of the present analysis. Some of these terms have been used elsewhere in the television literature, often ascribing similar meanings, but at times referring to somewhat different entities.

The way I define the program formats is by relating to different "profiles" based on the combinations of the attributes of television interviews explicated above. The following is a summary of the six attributes labeled A through F, each with its respective elements.

A - Function of interview

1. information
2. entertainment
3. information and entertainment

B - Salience of the interview

1. small part of program
2. significant portion of program
3. whole program

C - Frequencies of interviews and interviewees

1. one
2. few
3. many

D - Duration of interview

1. brief (up to one minute)
2. medium (1-10 minutes)
3. long (more than 10 minutes)

E - Degree of formality of interview

1. very formal
2. moderately formal
3. very informal

F - Homogeneity of interviewee types

1. all the same
2. a few in each of more than one type
3. all different

Using this scheme, it is possible to identify the profile of every

program type in the television repertoire, or even label specific programs, as far as interviewing contained in them is concerned. Three points must be stressed, however. First, the attributes which I have listed above are surely not the only ones that could be use to characterize the television interview. I believe, however, that the attributes selected for this discussion are central in providing a general and relevant framework for the concept of the television interview. Second, obviously not all 729 (3^6) possible combinations of the six attributes and their respective elements actually exist. Thus, it is futile even to attempt to talk about so many different kinds of television programs. Those selected for discussion here are the major ones of interest. And third, theoretically the three elements of each of the dimensions are mutually exclusive of one another, but in practice it often becomes difficult to ascertain precisely which profile fits each specific program within a program type. After all, it is common knowledge that within any program format there is some degree of variability as far as interviewing (or any other aspect of the program) is concerned. Thus, for example, within the category of "game shows" there are different specific shows, and within each show there may be some differences as far as interviewing is concerned. The same can be said of television news: there are different networks, different kinds of news shows (i.e., national vs. local; commercial vs. public; etc.), and between any two newscasts there may be differences as well. The purpose, then, of the classification using the profiles is to provide a series of "ideal types" of interviews within the framework of television programming.

Following, then, are program types which contain some form of interviewing. I would like to apologise to the audience for using specific examples only from television in the United States with which most of you, including myself, are quite familiar. I am sure, however, that you can easily substitute relevant examples from your own countries' repertoires as

well.

1. Game shows. I have purposely selected as the first kind of television program one that at first glance does not have any interviewing at all. And yet, it seems reasonable to consider as interviews the segments of such programs in which the host or master of ceremony introduces the contestants and asks them questions such as where they come from, what they do for a living, etc. Thus, I would define game shows such as Name That Tune, Family Feud, and Tic Tac Dough as programs with a $A_3B_1C_2D_1E_3F_3$ profile.

Translating this symbolic profile into prose we might say that the game show is typically one in which the function of the interviewing is to provide information as well as entertainment. In addition, interviewing usually takes up a very small part of the program and there are typically several contestants or participants (interviewees) in a given show. Moreover, the interviews are usually brief, often consisting of two or three very short questions and answers, the interview is very informal, and finally, the contestants being interviewed usually have varied backgrounds and are, thus, of different types.

2. Variety Shows. Another form of television program is the variety show such as the Tonight Show with Johnny Carson or the David Letterman Show, which usually consists of a few interviews as well as some entertainment segments, sometimes performed by the same people who are interviewed and sometimes by other people. Using our interview classification scheme, this kind of program would be characterized as having a $A_2B_2C_2D_2E_3F_2$ profile. In other words, variety shows usually contain interviews that are intended to entertain, rather than providing information; they take up a considerable part of the time of the program; there usually are a few such interviews in the program; the interviews are medium in length, lasting several minutes each; they are conducted in an

informal manner; and the "guests" on the shows (as the interviewees are referred to) are usually of various types -- singers, actors, etc.

3. Talk Shows. This format of television programming, including programs such as the Phil Donohue Show or Firing Line, essentially consists of several interviews with a variety of people. It's interview profile would be $A_1B_3C_2D_3E_2F_3$. Thus, the talk show format involves interviews which are primarily intended to provide information; the interviews take up the entire program; there usually are several personalities being interviewed in a given program; the interviews are relatively long; they are done in what would be considered as a moderately formal way; and the interviewees are of various types (politicians, professionals, artists, etc.).

4. Feature Interviews. This television program format is one which I suggest is only slightly different from the previous kind, differing on only one of the six attributes, that of the degree of formality of the interview. Thus, the profile of the feature interview would be $A_1B_3C_2D_3E_1F_3$. This kind of interview program, such as the Barbara Walters Special is mainly for information; the interviews take up the whole time slot of the program; there are usually two or three interviews in the program (although in this category one could conceivably think of an entire program devoted to one interview as used to be the case in the Dick Cavett Show); they are long in duration; they are formal; and the interviewees are of various types.

5. Documentaries. This program format includes such programs as 60 Minutes and 20/20. Its profile with respect to the interviewing it contains is $A_1B_2C_3D_2E_2F_3$. Thus, the interviewing in documentary programs is aimed at providing information; the interviews take up a significant portion of the program; there usually are several people interviewed in each report (the program often deals with more than one report but could conceivably be devoted to only one report); the interviews are of medium length; they are moderately formal (although sometimes they might be characterized as very

formal); and people of various types would be interviewed in them.

6. Current Affairs. The category of current affairs programs consists of programs such as Face the Nation, Meet the Press, This Week with David Brinkley and Nightline. However, I would suggest that slightly different profiles should be presented here for the various programs. Thus, Face the Nation and Meet the Press are very similar and would be characterized as having a $A_1B_3C_1D_3E_1F_1$ profile. In these programs, the objective is to provide information; the interview takes up the whole program; there is one interviewee; it is very formal; and the interviewees are usually always politicians, i.e., of one type, although there sometimes are exceptions.

As for This Week with David Brinkley, the profile would probably look like $A_1B_2C_3D_2E_1F_1$. This indicates that the program is also for informational purposes; a significant part of the program is devoted to interviewing; there usually is only one "guest" interviewee (if exclude consider the special form of interviewing in which Mr. Brinkley "interviews" his own reporter colleagues, usually towards the end of the program); the interview takes up a sizeable part of the program; the interview is quite long; it is quite formal; and the interviewees are usually of the same category, namely, politicians. Thus, this program differs from the earlier two in the current affairs format mainly with respect to the part of the entire program taken up by the interview and related to this, the length of the interview.

Nightline presents another version in this general category. Thus, it has a $A_1B_2C_2D_2E_2F_2$ profile. Putting this into words, Nightline is also for information purposes; a significant part of the program is devoted to the interviews; there are usually several interviewees, some in the filmed report which usually starts the program going and some in the direct interviews which follow; the interviews are usually of medium length, but in the filmed report they are often shorter; the degree of formality is

moderate, especially given Ted Koppel's idiosyncratic style; and the interviewees are usually of several types -- politicians, experts of various kinds, etc.

This current affairs format category clearly demonstrates the versatility of the classification scheme we have been using. Whereas in the game show, the variety shows, the talk shows, the feature interviewing and the documentary programs, most of the respective examples that can be given are highly similar, the current affairs category indicates some variation. This poses a conceptual dilemma: should the category list of program formats be expanded, thereby giving some television programs a category of their own (clearly some program producers would believe that their programs deserve such a position) or should we use the flexibility of the profile notation system to allow for slight differences within a given category. I have chosen the latter option, although the reader may wish to use the former approach. In any event, the use of the profiling scheme allows for flexibility between programs while pointing out the general rules as well as the inevitable exceptions.

7. News. If the current affairs category seems to have complicated the issue somewhat, then the news program format, which is the central one in this book, surely does not make things easier. Although I wish to deal with news as one format of television programming, it seems that as with the case of current affairs programs, I must present four sub-categories, each with its distinctive interview profile.

The first of these formats of television news is usually referred to as national evening network news (ABC's World News Tonight, CBS's Evening News and NBC's Nightly News). The interviewing profile in this kind of news program is $A_1B_1C_3D_1E_1F_3$ which indicates that the interviews are informative in nature; that they take up a small percentage of the time of the newscast; that there are numerous interviews in a given newscast; that they are brief

in duration; that they are almost always conducted in a formal setting; and that the interviewees are various people from all walks of life, although many are politicians, experts, etc.

The second format of television news includes such programs as the McNeil-Lehrer News Hour, which is carried by the Public Broadcasting stations. This program's interviewing profile is somewhat different: $A_1B_2C_2D_2E_1F_3$. Thus, this particular news program involves informational interviews; the interviewing takes up a large proportion of the newscast; there are few interviewees in each newscast; they are relatively long in duration; they are very formal; and various kinds of people appear on it, although mostly they are politicians, experts, etc.

The third category of news programs is that of the morning news magazines which are broadcast nationally by the commercial networks (ABC's Good Morning America, CBS's Morning News and NBC's Today Show). This program structure essentially contains two sub-programs, each with its characteristic interviews. The first is a miniature newscast, presented by a news anchor person and is similar in general terms to the national evening news format, except for the fact that it last about five to seven minutes, and is repeated with some variation four times during the two hour program. The profile of this segment is thus the same as for the national evening news format.

The other sub-program, which is similar to the television "talk show", is conducted by the "hosts" of the program (traditionally a male and female). The interview profile of this segment is different, however: $A_3B_2C_2D_2E_2F_3$. This indicates that the interviews are done both for information and entertainment; the interviews take up a significant portion of the program; there are several interviewees on each program; they are medium in duration; they are moderately formal; and the interviewees are various kinds of people.

The fourth and final category of television news, based on the classification of the interviews contained in them, is that of local news programs produced by the network affiliated stations as well as by independent stations. Given the fact that there are so many local stations and newscasts, any attempt to provide a single profile might be somewhat misleading. In any event, the following $A_3B_3C_1D_1E_2F_3$ profile is fairly representative of this format of television programming. Thus, interviews on the local news programs are information as well as entertainment oriented; they constitute only a small part of the newscast; there are fairly numerous interviews in each newscast; they are brief in duration; they are moderately formal (although there are some very formal and some very informal ones); and many kinds of people appear as interviewees.

In sum, it is suggested that there are several ways of classifying the various formats of television interviews, based on one or more attributes of the interview. What is even more important is the conclusion that we can derive from this brief presentation of the different formats, albeit a tentative conclusion. Accordingly, taking into consideration the combination of all six attributes, television interviewing as it appears in the various program formats can be quite different. Moreover, while the first six program formats presented are fairly similar in most western countries, interviewing in television <u>news</u>, as well as the general structure of the entire newscast, can differ quite significantly in various countries.

The codes of television interviewing

At this point I wish to enumerate and describe several <u>codes</u> which operate in the course of television interviewing. What I mean by a "code" is a characteristic of some sort which can be employed to systematically compare different interviews, either within the same program format (interview profile) or between program formats, within a given country or across countries, as well as within a particular point in time or over time.

In other words, a code should be conceived of as a variable for which empirical data can be gathered. As with any variable, each code must have at least two possible entities or values. A particular way of looking at the code is whether the particular feature is present or absent.

Four major categories of codes are relevant to the analysis and understanding of television interviewing: Identity codes, Verbal codes, Nonverbal codes and Situational codes. It will soon become clear that some of the codes are unique to television interviewing, while others could be considered as relevant to other journalistic interviewing, and in some cases to non-journalistic interviewing as well.

Identity codes

Of the four major code categories, the identity codes are the least unique to television. The identity codes refer to the "inherent" characteristics of the person being interviewed. They are important since they may be consequential in determining how the interview will be done and how it will proceed. The identity codes presented below do not totally exhaust all the possible characteristics of the interviewee. There are sufficient, however, to characterize each interviewee in a manner which will be relevant to the course the interview might take and for the purpose of making comparisons between different interviews. Furthermore, it should be noted that all the codes are relevant for each interviewee. Three groups of Identity codes are specified.

1. Demographic characteristics. The first group consists of two demographic characteristics: gender and place of origin. Whether the interviewee is male or female has potential significance in several respects. Also, whether or not the interviewee is native to the place of origin of the broadcast can be of importance. In this respect one can deal with the national or local level, i.e., is the interviewee an American or a foreigner (from the point of view of the U.S. networks) or is he or she a

New Yorker, for example, from the point of view of WCBS or WABC or WINS in New York.

2. Role in society. A second group of identity codes is concerned with the role of the interviewee in society. Specifically, we are interested in three characteristics: whether or not the interviewee is a public official (e.g., a civil servant, a judge, etc.); whether or not the interviewee is a professional or expert in some particular field (e.g., a doctor, a scientist, an economist, etc.); and whether or not the interviewee was elected to his or her position (e.g., a mayor or a town or the President of the United States). These three characteristics will enable us to determine if the interviewee is a relatively high ranking person or not.

3. Relationship to the story. The third and final group of identity codes deals with the relationship the interviewee has to the story which is being reported (this group of codes is generally more pertinent to programs on public affairs and news). The first code in this class is whether or not the interviewee is a random or non-random choice. Thus, for example, if a member of the house of representatives was interviewed concerning a bill he or she submitted, then the choice is not random. However, if that same member of the House is asked to comment on a bill pending legislation, when he or she is merely presenting the opinion of members who support (or oppose) the legislation, then the choice of that person would be considered as random since any other member of the House could presumably have been asked to speak on the issue.

The second code here is whether or not the person being interviewed is involved in the issue being discussed. Thus, for example, if a baseball fan is interviewed about the baseball players' strike, he or she would be considered as not being involved. On the other hand, if the owner of a baseball club was interviewed, that person would definitely be considered as being involved.

The final code in this group is whether or not the interviewee is a victim (note that being involved may or may not be equivalent to being a victim). Thus, for example, if a person whose house has just burnt down is interviewed, that person would be characterized as a victim, whereas the fireman on the scene would not be a victim, although the latter is clearly involved in the story being reported.

Verbal codes

The Verbal codes presented here are also not inherently related to television interviewing although sometime some of them may be manifested in a special way in the television context. This is mainly because all interviewing involves verbal interaction which essentially means that questions are asked and answers are given. There are two groups of Verbal codes: questioning techniques and rules of etiquette.

1. Questioning techniques. The essence of a good interview is asking the correct question which will elicit the appropriate reply. There are various kinds of questions and ways of stating them to the interviewee. Questions can be "neutral" or "indirect" which suggest to the interviewee and the audience that the interviewer is not biased, i.e., has no personal position and advocates no particular preference. On the other hand, there are "loaded" or "direct" questions which clearly indicate to the interviewee and the audience that the interviewer is attempting to pressure or to "corner" the interviewee. The term provocative questions is used for this kind of approach to the interviewee.

Thus, for example, in an interview with a top ranking politician, the interviewer who may think that the politician should resign might ask: "what do you think you should do given what has happened?" or he or she might say: "Don't you think that given what has happened you should resign?" The former approach is a neutral question whereas the latter is a provocative question.

Questions also vary in terms of whether or not they are planned in advance by the interviewer. In most journalistic interviews there is some plan which the interviewer develops prior to the interview. Accordingly, the interviewer knows ahead of time some of the questions that he or she will ask during the interview. However, many questions depend on the answers which are given by the interviewee to previous questions. Thus, the "follow-up" questions require an exact formulation during the course of the interview, and cannot generally appear in the list of questions which the interviewer prepares in advance.

The use of the different kinds of questions by the interviewer sets the stage for the interview itself. The way the questions are formulated will determine to a large extent the amount and quality of the information that will be obtained. Also, the way the questions are asked is an important factor in the form of interaction that will ensue during the course of the interview.

2. Rules of etiquette. The term "etiquette" means various things in the course of the interview, all of which are important in the way the interview commences, proceeds and ends. The way the interviewee is introduced and is referred to is important in establishing the relationship which will develop during the course of the interview. Are official titles such as "Mr. President" or "Senator" used, or are last names, or possibly even first names used? Moreover, is there a reciprocal relationship or is it a one-sided arrangement? Thus, for example, if Ted Kennedy is approached in an interview as "Senator Kennedy", does Kennedy refer to the interviewer as "Mr. Brokaw" or "Tom?"

In this connection, what impression is created in the interview? Is the interviewee speaking to the interviewer or to the television audience? For example, a reply could begin with the phrase: "Well, Mr. Y, I think..." or: "Well, Ted, I think..." Both these cases indicate a response directed at

the interviewer. On the other hand, the reply could be: "Well, I think..." which does not contain the direct reference to the interviewer. The difference may initially seem to be insignificant or trivial, but it is believed that the former approach, interjecting the name of the interviewer, is part of the "performance" or the "staging" of the interview as an interpersonal encounter, and is typical of certain kinds of interviews and not of others.

Another aspect of the rules of etiquette has to do with interrupting the interviewees or allowing them to complete what they are saying before the interviewer moves on to another question. Interviews vary on this factor to a large extent. Thus, sometimes the interviewee is interrupted often, and is given little chance to express his or her opinion, whereas on other occasions the interviewee is given the opportunity to reply at length and in detail. This seems to be the case regardless of whether or not the interview will be edited, which seems to suggest that this is a stylistic point rather than one of interviewer strategy. Related to the latter point is the extent to which the interviewer tries to force the interviewee to be brief by saying something like: "please state this briefly" or "we're running out of time, so please be brief."

The next Verbal code is verbal feedback. Feedback is provided by the interviewer to the interviewee in the form of such expressions as "aha," "yes," "I see," etc. This feedback can serve as reinforcement to what the interviewee is saying, both in terms of encouraging the interviewee to continue talking, and sometimes in the sense of indicating agreement to what he or she is saying.

The final element in the verbal category, (although some might consider this as belonging in the category of Nonverbal codes), is the use of voice intonation. The interviewer can use his or her voice to indicate agreement, but more often disagreement, disbelief or doubt. The use of voice

intonation is sometimes purposive and at times unconscious, but the extent to which it is used can have an impact on the course of the interaction taking place.

Nonverbal codes

Whereas the identity and verbal codes were not unique to television, the nonverbal codes are indeed quite unique to the television medium. In other words, the information that one can obtain by means of a television interview is both verbal and nonverbal. This major coding category will include three specific groups of nonverbal codes: spacial codes, artifactual codes, and filmic codes.

1. Spacial codes. Spacial codes refer to the way space is used in the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. Using Edward Hall's notion of varying distances, we may consider four possibilities. The "intimate" distance is very small (several inches) and typically occurs when the interview is conducted in a crowded setting such as an airport lounge or in the down town section of a large city. In such a situation the participants might almost be touching one another. The "personal" distance, that of several feet, can be, for example, when the participants sit at right angles to each other or on either side of a table. The studio interview is often set up in such a way that several yards separate the interviewer and the interviewee, which would be an example of the "social" distance. Finally, the "public" distance is the greatest, such as when a reporter in an auditorium stands up and asks the President a question at a press conference (I mention this type even though we have not gone into detail about press conferences). Of course all these situations refer to face-to-face interviews, whereas sometimes the participants are many miles apart, hooked up via satellite. This physical proximity factor is important for the way the interview is conducted since the distance can have an effect on the power relationships as well as on the ability of the interviewee to

"protect" him or herself from the interviewer.

The setting of the television studio designed for an interview can be arranged in various ways. Thus, for example, the interviewee and the interviewer can be seated in similar chairs or in different ones, they can be seated facing each other or at right angles to each other, and there may or there might not be some object of furniture separating them, such as a table, a desk or a rostrum. These factors serve an important role in establishing the "relationship" between the interviewer and the interviewee.

Another aspect of the proximity arrangements is whether or not the participants have eye contact with each other. Not facing each other, being too close or too far, or being in other locations such as in another studio, can make a difference in terms of how the two persons relate to one another. Visual feedback from either party, including head nods, smiles, or the raising of eye brows can be useful or detrimental. But in any event, they must be visible.

2. Artifactual codes. The second kind of nonverbal codes are the artifactual codes. What I mean by artifactual codes is the presence and/or use of various kinds of artifacts during the course of the interview. Interviews conducted outside the studio can be set up in a variety of ways: the interviewee may be seated in an office, behind a desk with a book case in the background, the interview may be conducted in a garden amidst colorful flowers; it may be conducted at the entrance to a factory where workers are on strike carrying picket signs; or the interview may be done in a crowded air terminal with many people rushing by as the backdrop. Whatever the setting, it is assumed that it will have some impact on the atmosphere in which the interview is conducted, and on the effects it may have on the viewers.

The use of objects in the presentation of information is another artifactual code. In many interviews there is no use of such objects;

however, when experts of various kinds are interviewed, such as scientists or artists, it is not uncommon to see interviewees such as experts using objects such as maps, tables, graphs and physical models of the subject being discussed in order to demonstrate what is being said.

The use of microphones in a television interview is self evident. However, there are various ways in which microphones are used, and they may have an influence on the form of the interaction taking place. Thus, for example, a miniature lavalier microphone might be fastened to each of the participants, making them relatively unobtrusive. This is typically done in studio settings. Another possibility in the studio is the use of desk microphones. In both cases, the interviewer and the interviewer have their own microphones and can thus speak and be heard whenever they please.

The use of technician operated microphones such as the overhead "boom" or the below the frame "shot gun" are other possibilities (the former is more common in the studio and the latter on location). These microphones can be quite obtrusive from the interviewee's point of view, particularly if he or she lacks experience in such a role.

Finally, there is the hand held microphone used by many reporters. This kind of microphone gives the interviewer a leading advantage in that he or she can "permit" the interviewee to speak, by pointing the microphone in his or her direction, or what is more important, the interviewer can "prevent" the interviewee from speaking by taking the microphone away. This can create an added aspect to the drama of the interaction. It should be mentioned that in an interview recorded "on location" sometimes the interviewer does not even use a microphone when asking the questions. Back in the studio, during the editing process, the questions can be inserted, if necessary.

3. Filmic codes. Filmic codes refer to the shots and techniques used by the camera people in filming and framing the interview. The first kind

of shot is one that provides the setting of the interview, that is, the establishing shot. This frame generally shows the interviewer and the interviewee together, thus providing the spacial and contextual relationship between them. Sometimes it only give the interviewee in a wider frame so that the audience can see where the interview is taking place. Thus, in interviews done "on location" the establishing shot will provide important information as to where and under what circumstances the interview is being conducted. The establishing shot is particularly important, however, when the participants are not in a face-to-face situation, so that the viewer can get the correct perspective of the situation.

Since an interview involves at least two participants, the use of cuts, that is, the changing of the frame from one person to the other by means of switching from one camera to another (or editing the interview to give such an appearance) is important for the flow of the interview. It allows the person speaking to be seen, or for a reaction shot of the person listening. The rate of camera switching could be an indication of the degree of verbal exchange between the participants, and could imply something about the dramatic nature of the encounter.

The size of the image on the television screen is another filmic code. Thus, the use of frames in which the person talking (most often the interviewee) is seen very close up, with his or her face (and sometimes only portions of it) taking up the entire screen, is a highly dramatic shot. The "close-up" is used to concentrate on facial features of the interviewee and often gives the impression of the camera "invading" the privacy of the person. It should be noted that an extreme close-up shot presents an "abnormal" frame, from the point of view of the face-to-face interaction. In fact, it is physically impossible for a person to come up close enough to another person so that only the chin, mouth, nose and eyes make up the entire frame and are still in focus. Only a camera can present such an

extreme "intimate" picture of a person. In television interviewing the use of the close-up shot is often associated with embarrassing questions or in situations where there is some doubt as to the veracity of the reply being given.

The close-up of the interviewee can be obtained in two ways, either by a direct cut from a "medium" shot or by zooming in whereby the camera gradually narrows in on the face of the interviewee. The latter is generally perceived to be more dramatic in that the interviewee is perceived to be slowly locked in and captured by the interviewer.

Reaction shots are pictures taken of the person not speaking at a given point in time. Sometimes the reaction shot is of the interviewer listening to the interviewee, and sometimes the interviewee is shown as he or she is listening to the question being posed by the interviewer. In the latter case, the viewer can see the facial reactions of the interviewee as he or she hears the question and plans to reply. A special kind of reaction shot is used in situations were there is more than one interviewee, like in a debate, in which case the camera may show one interviewee while another is speaking. Reaction shots quite often reveal the attitude that the listener has towards the person speaking. Sometimes reaction shots show both interviewer and interviewee by means of a split screen.

The final filmic code is a special kind of reaction shot, namely, a shot of some part of the interviewee's body other than the face, usually the hands. Sometimes the camera focuses on trembling fingers or on clasped hands. These behaviors are often considered as revealing tension on the part of the person speaking, thus the camera brings them along with the speaker's face.

Situational codes

The final set of codes has to do with situational codes which are usually unique to broadcast interviews, both radio and television. In this

category I include three groups of codes: the location of the interview, the directness of the broadcast, and editing. These three groups deal with particular aspects of the situation in which the interview takes place and the way it is presented to the audience.

1. The location of the television interview. The first point in the location codes is where the interview takes place. The major distinction is between studio and on-location interviews. From our perspective, there are two main kinds of studio settings: news studios and non-news studios. As for the on-location setting, there are several varieties, such as: indoor vs. out-of-doors; public vs. private places; home vs. place of work; etc.

The second point refers to the extent to which the interview is conducted face-to-face or by means of a remote arrangement. In other words, do the participants sit (or stand) facing one another, or are they only connected via some electronic hook-up such as micro-wave, satellite or simply by means of a telephone. The latter situation can vary from another studio in the same building to a complex circuit linking an astronaut in outer space with an interviewer on the ground.

The location of the interview is important as it can have a strong impact on how the interview proceeds. When both parties are in the studio, the interviewer has the "home" advantage. When the interview is conducted on-location, the interviewee may be more familiar with the setting and thus have an advantage. Generally the studio interview guarantees a more quiet and respectable setting, whereas the interview "on location" can often be awkward, embarrassing, and at times even dangerous. In face-to-face interviews both parties can utilize interpersonal feedback cues, whereas in remote arrangements the interviewer often has the advantage in being able to see the interviewee, but the interviewee can only hear the interviewer but not see him or her.

2. The directness of the broadcast of the interview. Live television

interviews took place since the early days of the medium. The context was different, however, from what it is today. When the television era began, most programs were presented "live" from the television studio, since there were no technological means to pre-record them. The only exception was the use of film when feature movies and newsreels were shown. As a matter of fact, newsreels required developing and transporting the film to the studio which could be far away, and therefore time consuming. With the advent of video tape (and later of micro wave technologies) it became possible to record interviews (as well as other programs) for broadcast at some other point in time or to transmit them "live" from another (often distant) location. Thus, today's television interview can be pre-recorded or presented "live" from virtually any location.

The main advantage of the "live" interview is that it takes place in "real time." This is particularly important when time is of essence, mainly in news and current affairs reporting. The main advantage of the pre-recorded interview is that if something in the interaction went wrong (on the part of the interviewer, the interviewee or both, as well as some external problem) the interview can be done over and be presented to the audience as a "better" product. Also, the taped interview can be used when interviewing takes place over varying time zones or when the interview can only be obtained at a time other than the scheduled program.

3. Editing. The final code to be discussed is that of editing. An interview can be presented in full, that is, the way it was conducted, or it can be edited. The editing possibility exists, of course, only for interviews that are taped prior to their being telecast. Editing can take many forms ranging from brief deletions in order to shorten the interview and/or by taking out some specific segment, to drastic editing in which only a few words from an interviewee's reply are kept and presented as a "sound bite", without the audience even hearing the question posed by the

interviewer.

The use, form and extent of editing depends upon the nature of the program, the time constraints available, and the prior understanding between the interviewer and the interviewee. Editing always runs the risk of modifying the meaning and context of what was said in the interview and the information that is presented to the audience. Editing is important not only in making the interview fit the time constraints of the program, but also in highlighting and emphasizing certain things which the interviewer wishes to make salient.

Some cross cultural examples of interviews in television news

First, a few words about the context of the data. As part of a larger study involving, among other things, a content analysis of television news in several countries, we were able to analyze a sample of newscasts in Britain (UK), West Germany (FRG), Israel (ISR) and the United States (USA). Twelve newscasts in each of the following networks were analyzed during the same days in January of 1984: in Britain, News At Nine (BBC1); in West Germany, Tageschau (ARD) and Heute (ZDF); in Israel, Mabat (IBA); and in the United States, World News Tonight (ABC), Evening News (CBS), and Nightly News (NBC). BBC1 was selected for logistical reasons, the two German networks were used since their newscasts are relatively short, and in Israeli the only existing network was used. The two German networks as well as the three U.S. networks were combined. In all the forthcoming analyses the different number and length of newscasts was taken into account.

Before presenting some sample data based on the codes explicated above, some general parameters of the samples are presented. Table 1 presents data on the prevalence of interviews in the news.

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Table 1 about here

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The findings in Table 1 clearly indicate substantial differences between the four countries. The most salient finding is the relatively little use that the West German networks make of television news interviews. Thus, only in 11% of their news items do interviews appear, on the average there are slightly more than one and one-half interviews per item which contains any interviews, and yet when an interview is conducted it is relatively quite long lasting, on the average, nearly 44 seconds, and most of the interviews consisted of only one clip.

In Britain nearly 39% of all news items contain interviews, more than in any of the other countries, when an item contains at least one interview it actually has an average of 1.5 interviews, the duration of each interview is nearly 26 seconds, and 15% of the interviews had more than one clip.

In Israel, fewer items contain interviews (nearly 28% of all items) but on the average each item containing at least one interview actually has almost two interviews. The length of the average interview is almost as it is in West Germany (41 seconds) but Israel had several extremely long interviews, the longest lasting six and one-half minutes, and 96% of its interviews consisted of one clip only.

Finally, in the United States despite the fact that fewer items contained interviews (31%) as compared with Britain, the average number of interviews in the newscasts was the highest among the four countries with more than 14 interviews per newscast, an average of almost three interviews were conducted per news item containing at least one interview, the average interview was the shortest lasting about 13 seconds, and 22% of the interviews were presented with more than one clip.

Reducing the findings even further it seems safe to say that in the U.S. and Britain interviews on television news tend to be relatively frequent, brief, with more clips and complex editing (there was an average of 0.17 cuts per second in the U.S. interviews compared with only 0.07 cuts

per second in the other three countries. On the other hand, the West German interviewing was especially heavy with few and lengthy interviews and with most interviews done in one clip. The Israeli style of interviewing was somewhat in-between with relatively more frequent interviews but also relatively very lengthy ones.

General topics

Table 2 presents the topics of the news items in which the interviews appeared.

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Table 2 about here

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Looking across all four countries, two trends seem to appear. First, news items concerning international politics, which are heavily evident in all the newscasts, are highly under represented as far as interviewing is concerned. This may be due either to the relative difficulty to obtain interviews, particularly with people from foreign countries (despite the availability of satellites and other technological devices) and/or to the fact that such matters are more concerned with institutions rather than with individual human beings. Also, there is a tendency for items on economics (in West Germany and Israel), business (in Britain, West Germany and Israel) and labor (in Britain) to have relatively more interviews than their general proportion in the entire array of topics. This may be due to the fact that such topics are relevant to the individual person as a consumer or worker. In addition, in West Germany and Israel there are fewer interviews concerning internal order than would be expected based on the number of such news items in the newscasts. Finally, there is relatively more interviewing that would be expected by the overall distribution of topics regarding health and welfare in the United States and in Israel and concerning education in Israel. These topics also concern individual people and may be

the reason for their relatively high salience in the interviewing context.

Language and translation of news interviews

In the case of the three U.S. networks 99% of the interviews were conducted in the native language, i.e., in English, and in Britain only 2.5% of the interviews were conducted with people in a language other than English. However, in West Germany and in Israel, 15% of all the interviews were conducted in a language other than German and Hebrew, respectively.

Of the five non-English interviews in the U.S. networks, four had voice-over translation into English and one had no translation at all. In Britain, of the three non-English interviews one had voice-over translation and the other two were not translated. In West Germany, the eight non-German interviews were translated into German in voice-over. In Israel, the 20 non-Hebrew interviews were translated into Hebrew using sub-titles on the screen.

Setting and location of the interviews

Comparing "live" and "pre-recorded" interviews indicates that Israel is clearly different from the other three: 7.6% of all the interviews in Israel were conducted "live", with less than 1% in Britain and 1.6% in the U.S. In West Germany not a single interview was conducted in a "live" situation. The specific locations in which the interviews of the four countries were conducted are presented in Table 3.

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Table 3 about here

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There are some impressive differences between the four countries. In the U.S. the single most employed background for an interview on TV news was in an office setting, followed by a public place such as a store, a street, a public (non-governmental) building, etc. Besides the studio setting, the least number of interviews were conducted in government buildings. In

Britain, the most popular place for the news interview was a public place followed by an office setting. Also in Britain, as in the U.S., the fewest interviews took place in government buildings. In West Germany, on the other hand, the greatest number of interviews took place in government buildings followed by public places, with offices far behind in third place. The fewest interviews took place in the home setting. And in Israel, the greatest number of interviews took place in public places followed by general places of work and government buildings close behind. As in Germany, the fewest number of interviews took place in a home setting.

Identity codes

As an example of the identity codes, let us examine the "role" of the interviewee. Table 4 presents the data. Note that since each interviewee was coded on several dichotomies, and sh/e could occupy more than one role, the percentages exceed 100%.

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Table 4 about here

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In West Germany a large majority (74%) of the interviewees were public officials, in Israel the corresponding figure is 49%, and in Britain and the U.S. they were 31% and 37% respectively. As for being elected to one's position, in West Germany 53% of all the interviewees were persons elected to their respective positions, whereas in the other three countries there were only between 22% and 30% of the interviewees who were elected officials. In Israel the percentage of expert or professional interviewees stood at 21% whereas in the other countries this figure ranged from 40-42%.

As for the context related interviewee variables, it seems that in West Germany there were the fewest randomly selected interviewees (25%), whereas the highest proportion of randomly selected interviewees was in the U.S. with 44% of all the interviewees.

In Israel 35% of all the interviewees were "victims" of one kind or another in the context of the news event being reported: in the U.S. and Britain 24-25% of the interviewees were victims, and in West Germany only 19% of all the interviewees were victims. Finally, in Israel nearly all (97%) of the interviewees were involved in the stories in which they were interviewed, in Britain this was the case in 94% of the cases, in the U.S. in 86%, and in West Germany only 81% of all the interviewees were involved. Put differently, 19% of all the West German interviewees were not involved in the stories in which they were interviewed.

Verbal codes

It seems reasonable to argue that the use of questions by the interviewer is probably the best measure of the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. Thus, as an example of the verbal codes, let us look at the extent to which questions are actually heard in the course of the interview. In all the interviews analyzed, a total of 74 questions were heard, which is an average of 0.14 questions per interview. In the other countries the situation in this respect is quite different. In Britain a total of 90 questions were heard being put to the interviewees, for an average of 0.74 questions per interview. In Israel a total of 111 questions were heard, which represent an average of 0.84 questions per interview. An finally, in West Germany only 72 questions were heard, but given the relatively few number of interviews, the mean number of questions per interview was a very high 1.36.

Looking at this data in a slightly different perspective, in 91% of the U.S. interviews not a single question was heard. In Britain the comparable figure is 65%, in Israel 64%, and in West Germany only 36%.

Nonverbal codes

The example I have chosen to present for the nonverbal codes is the amount of time the interviewees are shown in various shots. Table 5

presents the data for the four countries, across all interviewees.

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Table 5 about here

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In three countries except for the U.S., the interviewee is seen for the most part of the interview in a medium shot (ranging from 52% of the time in West Germany to 65% of the time in Britain). In the U.S. a medium shot is used only during an average of 24% of the time of the interview. On the other hand, in the U.S. there is a significant use of close-up shots (65% of the time of the interview) followed by Israel with 38% of the time, with Britain and West Germany ranging from 25% to 29%. Extreme close-up shots (from the chin to the forehead) are used rarely.

Situational codes

Finally, the example of the situational codes selected is that of the kind of microphone used in the interview. The data are presented in Table 6. The determination of the kind of microphone which was used was based on the visual cues that were available in the frame of the picture as seen on the screen.

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Table 6 about here

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In the U.S., Britain and Israel it was impossible to determine the kind of microphone used in 84%, 79% and 82% of the cases, respectively. However, in West Germany in only 36% of the interviews it was not possible to determine the kind of microphone being used. The outstanding finding is the wide spread use of the hand held microphone in West Germany. It is theoretically possible that due to the picture frame used, the kind of microphone cannot be determined. However, since the use of medium shots was essentially the same as in Britain and Israel (see Table 5) there is no

reason to suspect that the heavy use of the hand held microphone found in West Germany is an artifact of the analysis. Moreover, in personal interviews with reporters in the four countries, the West Germans were the only ones who expressed a clear preference for the hand held microphone.

Summary and conclusions

The main objective of this paper was to present a taxonomy which would classify the various kinds of interviews conducted on television. As an illustration, the scheme was then used to describe some differences between interviews conducted in television news in four countries. The select findings clearly indicate both the viability of the analytic scheme as well as the fact that interviewing in the news differs from one location to another.

It is not my purpose in the present paper to offer a specific rationale for the differences found among the four countries examined. Nevertheless, I would dare to suggest that such factors as the patterns of media ownership, political pressures and national character weigh heavily in such an explanation.

My main interest lies in television news, hence the examples that I have provided. Much more empirical data are available in addition to conclusions derived from numerous interviews (alluded to earlier) which I conducted with newspeople who themselves conduct interviews. This scheme can be used, however, for other kinds of television interviews as well.

Table 1

General Statistics on TV News Interviewing in the four countries

	UK	FRG	ISR	USA
Number of newscasts	12	24	12	36
Number of news items	206	288	246	612
Number of Items with interviews	80	33	68	191
Number of interviews	121	53	132	514
Number of interview clips	131	55	151	657
Mean number of items per newscast	17.2	12.0	20.5	17.0
Percentage of items containing at least one interview	39%	12%	28%	31%
Mean number of interviews per newscast	10.1	2.2	11.0	14.3
Mean number of interviews per news item (containing at least one interview)	1.51	1.61	1.94	2.69
Number of clips per interview	1.08	1.04	1.14	1.28
Percentage of interviews consisting of only one clip	85%	93%	96%	78%
Range of length of interviews (in seconds)	5-118	4-201	3-390	1-142
Mean length of interviews (in seconds)	25.8	43.7	41.0	13.4
Percent of entire newscast time devoted to interviews	17%	9%	22%	14%

Table 2

News Interviews by Topic Categories and Countries (in percent)

Topics	UK	FRG	ISR	USA
Internal Politics	5	52	9	19
Internal Order	18	-	9	12
Human Interest	6	-	2	11
Health and Welfare	2	-	14	10
International Politics	5	4	11	7
Economics	4	14	11	6
Business	11	15	8	6
Disasters and Accidents	11	-	1	5
Defence	3	10	2	4
Sports	9	-	-	4
Education, Science & Technology	4	-	10	6
Social Relations	4	-	3	3
Labor	17	4	11	1
Others	1	1	9	6

Table 3

Locations of the interviews by country (in percent)

	UK	FRG	ISR	USA
General place of work	14	2	21	10
Clearly visible office	16	13	14	30
Nature (out-of-doors)	12	-	8	11
Government building	1	34	20	6
At home	12	2	1	7
Public place	24	32	26	24
Studio or studio-like	14	6	5	2
Could not be determined	7	11	5	10

Table 4

Summary of identity variables of the interviewees by country (percent)

	UK	FRG	ISR	USA
Gender of interviewee (male)	83	93	84	83
Native to country of broadcast	92	83	85	95
Public official	31	74	49	37
Elected to position	22	53	30	28
Professional/expert	41	40	21	42
Random selection	34	25	32	44
Victim	25	19	35	24
Involved	94	81	97	86

Table 5

Time interviewee seen by type of shot and country (percent)

	UK	FRG	ISR	USA
Medium shot	65	52	56	24
Close-up shot	25	29	38	65
Extreme close-up shot	2	5	1	4

Table 6

Use of microphones by country (in percent)

	UK	FRG	ISR	USA
Cannot determine	79	36	82	84
Lavalier	7	2	2	8
Hand held	9	59	8	7
Soundman, table mike	5	3	8	1